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***GOVERNOR EMPHASIZES HER VISION FOR ARIZONA  
In State of the State, Cites the Need to Serve in Difficult Times***

PHOENIX – Saying that difficult times call upon everyone to serve the greater good of the state and the country, Governor Janet Napolitano emphasized the need – and the ability – to move forward on important long-term priorities for Arizona in her State of the State address Monday.

Governor Napolitano stressed that the future of Arizona hinges on continuing to build on the accomplishments of the past six years, even amid the nationwide recession and budget deficits. “The task is to meet these great challenges with short-term decisions that do not dim the bright future of this remarkable state,” she said.

The Governor named education, public safety, infrastructure and the social safety net as areas that must be protected in order to build a better future for Arizona. She announced that she will present a balanced budget plan this week that will protect those areas and will not raise taxes.

“When I took office, our state faced a budget deficit that many thought would sink our priorities for Arizona. Since then – in surplus and in deficit – I have always presented you with a balanced budget plan that moved Arizona forward,” Governor Napolitano said. “That’s an important lesson as we look at our situation today: We don’t have to go back. We do have to go forward.”

Governor Napolitano cited the service of Arizona’s National Guard members, as well as the state’s more than 1 million volunteers, as examples public officials should follow. She also extended well wishes to her likely successor, Secretary of State Jan Brewer, and encouraged Arizonans to “join with her, in the spirit of service, to move our state forward.”

Governor Napolitano focused on several areas in her address:

**Education**

The Governor once again named education as her “number-one priority.” In her address, she:

- Proposed a bill that would extend in-state tuition at Arizona universities and community colleges to every single veteran in Arizona, regardless of their previous residency. Stressed the need to preserve classroom spending. “Protecting education is what I mean when I say we cannot sacrifice the long term for the sake of short-term expediency,” the Governor said.
- Called for the \$1 billion university infrastructure stimulus package that was part of the FY 2009 budget to be implemented.

### **Infrastructure**

Saying an infrastructure stimulus is likely coming from the federal government and that infrastructure development creates jobs, the Governor:

- Proposed new infrastructure to improve school facilities. “These new buildings will be energy efficient, they will provide an economic stimulus and they will build a legacy that is able to serve this state for decades,” she said.
- Called for the Legislature to build from a citizen’s transportation proposal kept from voters in 2008. “I ask you to build from this citizen’s proposal, hold additional hearings, and allow the people of Arizona to have their say on this critical issue by 2010,” she said.
- Emphasized the need to move forward on renewable energy initiatives, saying “the entire nation is going in this direction – and Arizona has much to gain by being a leader.”

### **Safety net services**

“It is our job to protect and continue to invest in the safety net for those hardest-hit in Arizona, so they can prosper when the storm passes,” the Governor said in her address, emphasizing the need to protect Arizona’s children. “These children are growing and learning today – they deserve to be able to do so safely, without becoming sick, or hungry, or homeless,” she said.

### **Public safety**

Citing accomplishments in public safety and calling Arizona “the most innovative and active state in the nation in addressing – head-on – the consequences of our nation’s broken borders,” Governor Napolitano announced a new proposal to broaden Arizona’s human-smuggling law. “We have to keep up this intense pressure on the border criminals who use violence and fraud to smuggle people and drugs into our country,” she said.

### **Government reform**

The Governor called for reform of the initiative and referendum processes. “Our statutes must be revised to further the ability of the people to enact legislation,” she said. The Governor also called for changes to the referendum process to preserve the balance of power between the legislative and executive.

The Governor closed her address by thanking Arizonans for the opportunity to serve. “Leaving is very difficult,” she said. “But I believe the post our new President has asked me to fill is critical to the safety of Arizonans and to all Americans. I will do my utmost there, as I have done here.”

Governor Napolitano also expressed her confidence in the future of Arizona, even during difficult times. “While these are arduous times, and the tasks that lie ahead will not be easy, I trust that when I return home, I will find an Arizona that continued to build its long-term future – an Arizona that has realized even more of what it can be,” she said.

A copy of the Governor’s State of the State address is attached.

For more information about the Office of the Governor, please visit [www.azgovernor.gov](http://www.azgovernor.gov).